

Application No. 09/880,243
Amendment "B" dated February 18, 2005
Reply to Office Action mailed January 26, 2005

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Initially, this amendment after final should be entered because it places the application in condition for prompt allowance without adding any new issues for consideration. In fact, all of the rejected subject matter is now being cancelled, to be pursued in a continuation, so that the allowable subject matter of the present case can advance to issuance.

In the final Office Action, January 26, 2005, claims 1-7, 9-20, 22-25, 35-43 and 45-48 were considered. Of those claims, claims 1-7, 9-12, 17-20, 22, 24-25, 43, 45 and 47-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanamura (U.S. Patent No. 6,587,508) in view of Werner (U.S. Patent No. 6,668,088)¹, while claims 13-16, 23 and 46 were objected to for depending on rejected based claims, but were otherwise found allowable. Claims 35-42 were also allowed as presented.

By this paper, claims 1-7, 13, 23 and 46 have been cancelled and claims 9, 17 and 43 have been amended to include all of the limitations of allowed/objected to claims 13, 23 and 46, respectively, such that amended claims 9, 17 and 43 now comprises allowable claims 13, 23 and 46 written in independent form. Accordingly, inasmuch as all of the remaining claims now depend from one of these allowable independent claims (9, 17, 43) or independent claim 35 (which was previously allowed), all of the claims should now be found in condition for prompt allowance.

Furthermore, inasmuch as this resolves all issues of record, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims 9-12, 14-20, 22, 24-25, 35-43, 45, and 47-48 and this application should now be found in condition for prompt allowance.


¹ Although the prior art status of the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicants reserve the right to challenge the prior art status of the cited art at any appropriate time, should it arise. Accordingly, any arguments and amendments made herein should not be construed as acquiescing to any prior art status of the cited art.

Application No. 09/380,243
Amendment "I" dated February 18, 2005
Reply to Office Action mailed January 25, 2005

In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 17 day of February 2005.

Respectfully submitted,



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